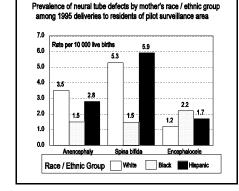


Highlights of the Texas Birth Defects Monitoring Division Bureau of Epidemiology, Texas Department of Health

Impact of Birth Defects in Texas

- C Roughly 10,000 Texas babies are born annually with one or more major structural malformations
- C Birth defects are the leading cause of death among infants in Texas (550 deaths, or 1/4 of all infant deaths in 1995)
- C Birth defects are the third leading cause of death among 1-14 year-olds in Texas (82 deaths in 1995)
- C Birth defects are the seventh leading cause of premature death among all Texans
- C Birth defects are a major cause of lifetime disability
- C Children with birth defects account for 25-30% of pediatric hospital admissions
- C Health care costs for children with birth defects exceed \$1 billion annually in the U.S.
- C Mortality, disability, and costs associated with birth defects can be decreased through prevention (Examples: folic acid-preventable anencephaly and spina bifida, fetal alcohol syndrome)



Features of the Texas Birth Defects Act of 1993

- C A statewide birth defects registry
- C Cluster and special investigations
- C Referral into services
- C Confidentiality

- C Inter-agency cooperation
- C Research and prevention
- C Access to data for outside researchers
- C Coordinated efforts with Mexico

The Texas Birth Defects Monitoring Division

Vision: As a recognized leader in its field, the Texas Birth Defects Monitoring Division will make major contributions to the health of Texans through programs of excellence in birth defects surveillance, research, and prevention, all through strategic alliances.

Mission: To protect and to promote the health of the people of this State, the Texas Birth Defects Monitoring Division will:

- C Identify and describe the patterns of birth defects in Texas;
- C Collaborate with others in finding causes of birth defects, working towards prevention, and linking families with services.

Division Objectives

Surveillance

- C Create and maintain a registry of birth defects in Texas
- C Describe the patterns of birth defects in Texas
- Monitor data for changes in rates through time and place
- C Respond to requests for data
- C Respond to perceived changes in the occurrence of birth defects (cluster investigations)
- C Evaluate Registry
- C Compile and disseminate surveillance data

Research

C Participate in and facilitate research studies to help identify causes of birth defects

Prevention

C Support the education of the general public and health professionals about the causes, surveillance, impact, and prevention of birth defects

Services

- Refer identified children and their families into services
- C Evaluate referral program
- C Compile and disseminate referral data

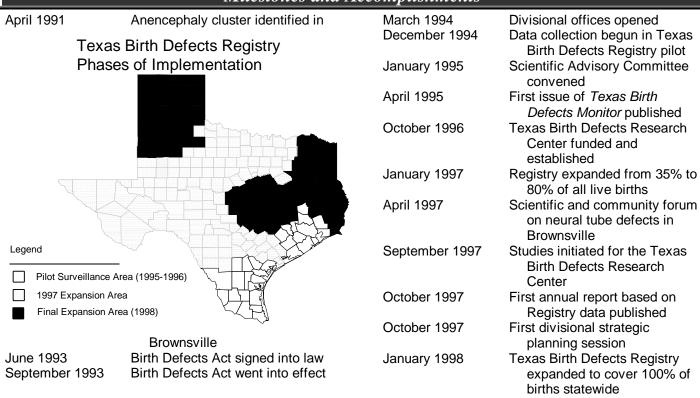
Texas Birth Defects Registry

- C Computerized database of all children with birth defects
- C Multiple data sources
- C Emphasis on structural malformations
- C Includes prenatally diagnosed cases
- Active surveillance--trained staff visit facilities to collect information
- Pilot project through 1996 in two of the eleven public health regions (Houston, Lower Rio Grande Valley)
- C Expanded significantly in 1997; final expansion implemented in 1998
- C Provides cases and generates research hypotheses for further studies

Texas Birth Defects Research Center

- C 5-year, \$3,478,000 grant awarded in 1996 by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to establish one of eight national birth defects research "Centers of Excellence"
- C Funded because of strong State-supported birth defects registry
- C Emphasis on finding preventable causes of birth defects
- C Using cases from the Registry, allows more indepth local research and participation in national collaborative studies
- C Conduct research with collaborators at the Texas Department of Health and universities

Milestones and Accomplishments



Plans for SFY 1998- 1999

- C Implement strategic plan (e.g. enhance automation, partnerships, prevention programs)
- C Implement fully and evaluate the referral component of the Registry
- C Disseminate Registry and referral data from pilot
- C Examine case finding data to make the identification of Registry cases more efficient
- C Initiate monitoring function of Registry
- C Partner with other organizations to sponsor a statewide birth defects conference
- Develop prevention fact sheets and birth defects educational materials
- C Conduct research studies and disseminate findings